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PRINCIPAL ACCESSIONS BY GIFT

DECEMBER 15, 1905—JANUARY 20, 1906

FOUR PAINTINGS BY ENGLISH MASTERS.—The four paintings presented to the Museum by Mr. William T. Blodgett and Miss Eleanor Blodgett, in memory of their father, Mr. William Tilden Blodgett, are of the first importance and of unusual beauty. They are by the master painters, Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), John Constable (1776-1837), George Romney (1734-1802), and Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), and each one may be taken as a worthy example of the style of its painter.

The pictures have especial interest in that having remained for the past forty years in the possession of one family, and having thus eluded the observation of the present generation of English writers on art, they come before the public now with the added charm of novelty.

Sir Joshua Reynolds is represented by the striking portrait of Mrs. Baldwin, wife of the British Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Teheran, taken in a Persian costume worn at a fancy dress ball given by George III. This painting came from the collection of the Earl of Charlemont.

Mrs. Baldwin is seated upon a dull red cushioned divan with the figure to the front, the face turned to the left in profile. She wears a Persian costume with an old gold and white turban headdress, topped with a bunch of red flowers. Her hair is black and falls in small braids over her left shoulder; depending from a black ribbon about her neck are strings of fine pearls; the gown is of striped silk, golden brown in color, with broad sash and buckle at the décolleté waist and a white chemise below. A broad ermine cape covers the shoulders, falling gracefully down into the lap. The background is deep and rich in its warm brown tones and has a dull red curtain at the left, drawn up showing a gleam of light from a window below.

Romney's delicate art is shown to advantage in a portrait of Mrs. Fitzherbert, painted for George IV, when Prince Regent.

The subject is seated with the figure to the front, her face turned to the right nearly in profile, the eyes looking in the same direction. She wears a white dress, open at the neck, with a sash around her waist. Her abundant blond hair, bound with a pale blue ribbon, falls about her face and shoulders

in a charming and artistic manner. The background is warm gray and cloudy in effect.

The painting was engraved by Charles Waltner, and comes from the collection of Viscount Rambaugh.

The Gainsborough painting is a portrait of the artist when he was about forty years old, and is not included in the "Catalogue of Pictures" compiled for Sir Walter Armstrong's biography. It came from the collection of Mr. Montgomery, natural son of the Duke of Wellington.

Gainsborough left several portraits of himself, which are thought to have been good likenesses. Sir Walter Armstrong says of him:

"He was tall, well-proportioned, and strong, and his hair light rather than dark. His face was on the large side, and his features strongly marked. His forehead was not high, but it was wide, and overhung the eyes as a painter's should. In profile it receded slightly, continuing the line of the nose. The eyes were quiet, observant and rather small; the mouth sensitive and undecided, but not weak; it suggested a man who changed easily, but not on compulsion from without."

The fourth painting, the one by Constable, is a landscape of splendid quality.

The scene, which is overlooked from a slight elevation on the bank of the river, extends down through a picturesque valley in the County of Suffolk, where Constable lived and which he loved so well to paint. The low lying, deep blue hills which skirt the horizon rise into a sky filled with broken heavy watery clouds which shadow the broad meadow lands beneath; gleams of sunlight illumine the broad acres and glint over the surface of the stream which winds down beneath a rustic bridge in the middle distance to the foreground of the picture, where two clumsy boats, with figures, are drawn up near the left bank of the river. Above the boat is a large group of sturdy oaks; at the right a cottage snuggled among a cluster of small trees and bushes which creep along the bank of the stream to the immediate foreground, where two boys are seated on the bank fishing.

GEORGE H. STORY.

FOUR ENGLISH PAINTINGS
A MEMORIAL TO
WILLIAM TILDEN BLODGETT
GIVEN BY HIS CHILDREN
ELEANOR AND
WILLIAM T. BLODGETT



PORTRAIT OF MRS. FITZHERBERT, BY GEORGE ROMNEY



PORTRAIT OF THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, BY HIMSELF



PORTRAIT OF MRS. BALDWIN, BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



ON THE RIVER STOUR, BY JOHN CONSTABLE

PORTRAIT OF JOSEPH KYLE.—Miss Louise Sherman Kyle has given to the Museum a portrait of her father, Joseph Kyle (1815-1863), painted by himself.

Kyle was a native of Ohio, but he early went to Philadelphia where he studied with Thomas Sully and Bass Otis. Coming to New York, he devoted himself to portraits and the painting of historical subjects. He was elected an associate of the National Academy of Design in 1849.

A SKULL CUP.—The accompanying illustration serves to call attention to a unique sacrificial cup consisting of the highly polished upper half of a human skull, which, with its brass stand and cover, set with turquoise and enameled, represents the fancy of Lamaistic workmanship. Lamaism, it should be explained, is a corrupted form of Buddhism prevailing in Tibet and Mongolia. This cup is the gift of Mr. William M. Laffan.

STATUETTE OF SAMUEL F. B. MORSE.—The sculptor of this bronze statuette, donated by the Society of Dutchess County of New York, is not known; he is thought to be Henry Kirke Brown, the sculptor of the Lincoln Statue in Union Square. The figure of the founder of the American system of the

electro-magnetic telegraph stands with the left arm leaning on a pedestal upon which is a telegraphic apparatus, and with the left hand, uplifted, holding a tape. The pedestal bears the name "Samuel F. B. Morse," and the date "1832."

A GROUP IN HÖCHST PORCELAIN.—This little pastoral group of two figures, delightfully modeled and colored, is a type of the prevailing style of the seventeenth century, and is appropriately called "Sylvia." It is of porcelain from the factory of Höchst in Nassau, Germany, which was originally founded as a faïence manufactory in the early seventeenth century by a workman called Gelz, of Frankfort. After the invasion of the French in 1794, the factory, which had in the meantime become the property of the State, was discontinued.

In its most prosperous period many of the best pieces of porcelain were modeled and signed by a sculptor named Melchior. The present piece is not signed, but it dates unmistakably from the best period. The group was never extensively reproduced, and only one other copy is known. This is in the Museum of Sèvres.

We are indebted to the liberality of Mr. Jacques Seligman for this valuable accession to our collection of ceramics.

